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LETTER DATED 12 AUGUST 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government and with reference to the letter dated 13 July 1991 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/45/1035-S/22787), I wish to state that, while Iraq affirms its willingness to do everything to protect the environment and natural resources and not to exploit them as a weapon in times of armed conflict, it is to be regretted that the above-mentioned letter disregards the appalling environmental damage caused by the coalition forces in Kuwait and Iraq.

In my country this damage included water purification stations and related chemical facilities, drainage and sewage stations and pipelines, oil refineries, electric power stations and distribution networks and caused untreated effluent to pour into the streets of towns and led to heavy contamination of rivers by sewage, the piling up of garbage, environmental damage to fields and orchards and a serious deterioration in public health. I wish to refer here to paragraphs 8 and 21 of the report dated 20 March 1991 which was submitted to you by the mission led by Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management (S/22366) and to paragraphs 15 and 16 of the summary of the main conclusions and recommendations contained in a report to you dated 15 July 1991 on humanitarian needs in Iraq prepared by the mission led by Sadruddin Aga Khan (S/22799). In addition to this damage, allied aircraft dropped thousands of tons of explosives and bombs on towns and rural areas, roads and bridges, cultivated fields and industrial installations, inflicting serious damage on the environment.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 142 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdul Amir A. AL-ANBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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